

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEA-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 SAJ-01 DRC-01 /148 W

----- 126496

R 311716Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2005

UNCLAS OTTAWA 2584

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, CA, US

SUBJECT: CANADIAN REACTION TO US MEASURES IN ME CRISIS

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF FIRST NEWSPAPER ARTICLE COMING TO
EMBASSY'S ATTENTION ON CANADIAN REACTION TO US MILITARY
ALERT AND OTHER ME MEASURES TAKEN LAST WEEK. ARTICLE BY
JOHN BEST IN TORONTO GLOBE AND MAIL OF OCTOBER 31, PAGE 9.
RELEVANT COLUMN BY CHARLES LYNCH TO FOLLOW SEPTEL.

BEGIN QUOTE: HEADLINES - NATO ALLIES NOT ADVISED OF
MILITARY ALERT. IGNORED BY U.S. DURING MOVES ON MIDEAST
CEASEFIRE, OTTAWA OFFICIALS MIFFED.

TEXT - CANADIAN OFFICIALS ARE UNHAPPY OVER THE LACK
OF U.S. CONSULTATION ON VARIOUS MOVES BY WASHINGTON-
POLITICAL AS WELL AS MILITARY-CONNECTED WITH THE MIDDLE EAST
CEASEFIRE.

THOUGH RELUCTANT TO CONDEMN WASHINGTON OPENLY, OTTAWA
AUTHORITIES LEAVE NO DOUBT THAT IN THEIR VIEW THE UNITED
STATES COULD HAVE KEPT NATO ALLIES MUCH BETTER INFORMED.

THE MISGIVINGS HERE FOCUS BOTH ON THE WORLD-WIDE MILI-
TARY ALERT PROCLAIMED FOR U.S. FORCES BY PRESIDENT RICHARD
NIXON LAST WEEK, AND THE SECRET SUPERPOWER DIPLOMACY THAT
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LED UP TO THE ORIGINAL ARAB-ISRAELI TRUCE ON OCTOBER 22.

HOWEVER, THEY APPEAR STRONGER IN RELATION TO THE ALERT THAN IN RELATION TO THE WHEELING AND DEALING BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND MOSCOW.

THE FEELINGS HERE ARE SIMILAR TO, THOUGH PERHAPS NOT SO STRONG AS, ANNOYANCE REPORTED TO BE WIDESPREAD IN EUROPE OVER THE WAY THAT WASHINGTON HANDLED ITS VARIOUS PEACE MOVES.

HOWEVER, IN AT LEAST ONE RESPECT CANADA'S POSITION APPEARED MARKEDLY DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF EUROPE. OFFICFPLS SAID THAT TO THEIR KNOWLEDGE, THERE HAS BEEN NO OFFSETTING CRITICISM OF CANADA BY THE UNITED STATES.

THE AMERICANS HAVE COMPLAINED THAT EUROPEAN MEMBERS OF NATO REFUSED TO COOPERATE IN U.S. FERRYING OPERATIONS FOR RESUPPLYING ISRAEL WITH WEAPONS.

THEY HAVE ALSO COMPLAINED OF LACK OF EUROPEAN SUPPORT FOR THE ALERT PROCLAIMED AFTER RUSSIA THREATENED TO SEND TROOPS TO HELP SUPERVISE THE CEASEFIRE.

U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN ROBERT MCCLOSKEY EARLIER CRITICIZED THE ALLIES FOR WITHHOLDING THE KIND OF SUPPORT WASHINGTON WOULD HAVE LIKED TO RECEIVE DURING THE ALERT PERIOD-- AND, IN THE CASE OF SOME, OF SEEKING TO DETACH THEMSELVES FROM U.S. MILITARY AID FOR ISRAEL.

MR. NIXON NOTED THAT 'EUROPE, WHICH GETS 80 PER CENT OF ITS OIL FROM THE MIDEAST, WOULD HAVE FROZEN TO DEATH THIS WINTER UNLESS THERE HAD BEEN A SETTLEMENT.'

THOUGH CANADA HAS REMAINED OUTSIDE THE LINE OF FIRE BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND EUROPEAN CAPITALS, OFFICIALS HERE ARE SKEPTICAL ABOUT THE NEED FOR THE ALERT.

'NOBODY HERE KNOWS ANY BETTER THAN ANYBODY ANYWHERE ELSE WHAT THAT ALERT WAS ALL ABOUT,' SAID ONE OFFICIAL, THOUGH HE ADDED THAT CANADA HAD BEEN GIVEN THE IMPRESSION THAT IT WAS LOW-KEY, 'A STEP REQUIRED IN AMERICAN PRACTICE TO GET UNCLASSIFIED

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SOLDIERS ON STANDBY.'

CANADA NEVER WAS INFORMED OF THE ALERT IN A FORMAL, GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT WAY. THE INFORMATION WAS SIMPLY PASSED ALONG TO CANADIAN OFFICIALS AT NORAD HEADQUARTERS IN COLORADO SPRINGS THE DAY IT WAS PUT INTO EFFECT.

ASKED WHETHER CANADA WAS SATISFIED WITH THE WAY IT WAS

TREATED AT THE TIME OF THE ALERT, AN EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN WOULD NOT ANSWER DIRECTLY. BUT HE MADE
IT CLEAR THAT IN CANADA'S JUDGMENT THERE WAS SOME JUSTIFICA-
TION FOR CHAGRIN.

WHILE THE MIDDLE EAST DOES NOT COME WITHIN NATO'S
SPHERE OF JURISDICTION, HE SAID, DEVELOPMENTS THERE ARE 'VERY
RELEVANT' TO THE SECURITY CONCERNS OF THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE.

THERE WAS THEREFORE GROUND TO ARGUE THAT ADVANCE CONSUL-
TATION SHOULD HAVE TAKEN PLACE. TO THAT EXTENT, ALL THE
MEMBERS OF THE ALLIANCE FELT THEY HAD CAUSE FOR COMPLAINT.

THE SPOKESMAN EMPHASIZED THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS UN-
DER NO OBLIGATION TO CONSULT ITS ALLIES ON A PURELY 'NATIONAL'
ALERT. BUT IT HAD THE POTENTIAL OF BECOMING SOMETHING MORE
THAN THAT.

PRESSED FOR A STATEMENT AS TO WHETHER IN THAT CASE
CANADA DIDN'T FEEL IT HAD BEEN LET DOWN BY WASHINGTON, THE
SPOKESMAN SIDESTEPED.

'IF PEOPLE HAD THEIR DRUTHERS I SUPPOSE WE WOULD WANT
TO BE CONSULTED ON EVERYTHING,' HE SAID.

ANOTHER OFFICIAL APPEARED TO SHOW SYMPATHY WITH THE
EUROPEAN POSITION, SAYING SOME OF THE REASONS FOR EUROPEAN
CRITICISM OF THE UNITED STATES WERE 'RATHER EVIDENT.'

'SOME OF THE EUROPEAN NATIONS CONSIDERED THAT THE UNITED
STATES WAS NOT PLAYING A WESTERN ROLE BUT PURELY A NATIONAL
ROLE,' HE ADDED. END QUOTE.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MOBILIZATION, ARMISTICE, PRESS COMMENTS, ARMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973OTTAWA02584
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: OTTAWA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t1973102/aaaaabfh.tel
Line Count: 154
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: kellerpr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <28-Aug-2001 by phillir0>; APPROVED <02-Jan-2002 by kellerpr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CANADIAN REACTION TO US MEASURES IN ME CRISIS FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF FIRST NEWSPAPER ARTICLE COMING TO
TAGS: PINT, CA, US, XX, XF
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005